WASHINGTON POST
AND TIMES HERALD

Sanitized - Approved For Release : CIA-RDP75-00149R0

[redacted]

25X1A9a

Dulles Explains Issues in Book

By Warren Rogers Jr.
Associated Press

Secretary of State John Foster Dulles yesterday pulled the rug out from under two major assertions in a new book about him.

Dulles told a news conference:

• His withdrawal last July of a United States offer to help Egypt build a billion-dollar dam at Aswam on the Nile River was not an attempt to force a Middle East showdown with Russia.

• The United States has made no flat commitment, secret or otherwise, to help defend the Nationalist Chinese islands of Quemoy and Matsu off the Red-held China mainland.

The Secretary spoke out in reply to questions based on a book being published today. Called "John Foster Dulles: A Biography." It is an extremely friendly account by Time magazine's diplomatic reporter, John Robinson (Jack) Beal.

"Major Gambit"

Beal wrote, after personal interviews with Dulles, that Dulles' withdrawal of Aswan Dam aid was "a truly major gambit in the cold war." Beal said it was aimed at exposing "Russia's foreign economic pretentions" and demonstrating to swavering neutrals that even United States tolerance eventually "must give way to firmness."

Beal also said in his book that President Eisenhower sent Nationalist China's President Chiang Kai-shek a secret "personal letter . . . satisfying him that the United States would help defend Quemoy and Matsu."

Dulles said the United States policy toward Quemoy and Matsu was expressed in the "Formosa Resolution" adopted by Congress Jan. 28, 1956. This resolution gave congressional approval to Administration policy of publicly vowing to protect the Nationalist islands of Formosa and the Pescadores.

[When Dulles was asked whether his denials amounted to saying that "there is no American commitment of any kind implicit or explicit, stated or implied, to defend these islands beyond the actual language of the congressional resolution," the Secretary replied: "That is correct."

[Dulles also said that the decision on whether to defend Quemoy and Matsu "will be made by the President when the circumstances call for it." He would not comment on any Eisenhower letters to Chiang other than to say that "I wouldn't want to say that there had never been any private communication between the President and the heads of other governments."]

Gives Reasons

With regard to the Aswan dam, Dulles said there were a number of reasons why he decided to pull back the United States aid offer.

He said there was doubt in his mind that Egypt — then weighed down by heavy commitments to pay for Soviet-supplied weapons — was economically strong enough. He said the United States might wind up "disliked instead of liked" if Egypt should fail to meet the long-term financial responsibility involved in building the gigantic dam.

[Dulles gave as "perhaps first and most imperative" of his reasons a Senate Appropriations Committee vote to bar aid for the dam. He also noted that Egypt then had just recognized Red China diplomatically.

[The Secretary contended that the Egyptians "in a sense forced" the United States to decide whether "nations which play both sides get better treatment than nations which are stalwart and work with us." To this, he said, there was "only one proper response." He added that Egypt had been given the negative answer "in a courteous manner."]

On another point, Dulles said he did not expect Egypt's President Gamal Abdel Nasser to react by seizing the Suez Canal. Nasser's seizure followed withdrawal of Aswan aid by one week. It was a prelude to fighting which ranged Britain, France and Israel against Egypt and led to closure of the canal because of sunken ships.

Beal said in his book that Dulles withdrew the aid offer "knowing it would bring reaction on a commensurate scale."

CPYRGHT

CPYRGHT

CPYRGHT

CPYRGHT

Sanitized - Approved For Release : CIA-RDP75-00149R000100310005-5